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### **REMARKS**

Claims 1-6, 16 and 18 remain in the application.

In Item 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner provides a response to the arguments filed by the Applicant on January 15, 2009 regarding rejections under 35 USC §102. The Examiner maintained the rejection under 35 USC §102 in view of Fassauer.

It is respectfully argued that claim 1 as currently amended distinguishes over Fassauer. by the absence of two limitations from the teaching of Fassauer.

#### **OPEN PLEAT**

According to the Examiner's argumentation, an open pleat is shown by Fassauer at Fig. 16. The Examiner identifies the open pleat as being around rod 71. It is respectfully argued that rod 71 supports the sheet (i.e., referred to as pocket by Fassauer) by being inserted into a loop formed by a profile clamping strip 70 at the end of the pocket. This is clearly visible in Fig. 16 in which the loop shape of the profile clamping strip is clearly illustrated.

In the present application, the sheet is simply folded over and does not form a loop. Although the expression open pleat was previously inserted in claim 1, more details are inserted in claim 1 to explicitly describe what an open pleat is, namely a pleat having a free longitudinal edge unconnected to the sheet. The amendment is fully supported by the application as filed, for instance as shown in the drawings.

It is respectfully argued that Fassauer does not support in any way the presence of an open pleat as defined in claim 1. Rather, the loop illustrated in Fig. 16 is actually an additional profile clamping strip made of a specific material. The loop is essential to Fassauer and represents a costly solution to produce when compared to an open pleat that is part of the sheet (i.e., the sheet being folded at an end), whereby no additional material is required. Therefore, by the absence of this limitation from Fassauer, claim 1 is deemed to patentably distinguish over Fassauer.

#### **ABUTMENT PORTION**

The Examiner identifies item 77 of Fassauer as representing an abutment portion. Item 77 is an open recess that is part of an interlocking hook 67. Referring to Fig. 15, it is seen that the interlocking hooks 67 are positioned on the corners of the pocket

Commissioner for Patents

11. Moreover, the rod 71 has rod tips 73 extending beyond the clamping strip 70. Therefore, the interlocking hooks 67 hook onto the rod tip 73 without interfering at any point with the clamping strip 70.

Claim 1 is herein amended to clearly emphasize that the abutment portion is securable against the longitudinal member "*on the sheet for pressing the sheet and the pleat against both the opposed surfaces of the longitudinal member.*" Therefore, in claim 1, the abutment portion has a function of securing the sheet against the longitudinal member. As such, there is clearly no abutment portion in Fassauer, as the hooks 67 simply cooperate with the rod 71 and nothing else.

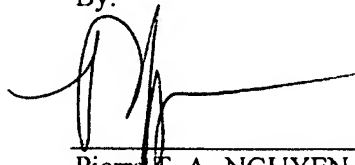
Therefore, this represents a second limitation that is absent from Fassauer and that is not taught by the prior art.

The Applicant has identified two limitations of claim 1 that are absent from Fassauer and from the prior art. Accordingly, claim 1 as currently amended is deemed to patentably distinguish over the prior art.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, this application is deemed to be in condition for allowance, and early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,  
Yvon CHARBONNEAU

By:



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(Date)

Pierre T. A.-NGUYEN (Reg. No. 55,043)  
Agent of Record  
OGILVY RENAULT LLP  
1 Place Ville Marie, Suite 2500  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3B 1R1  
Tel.: (514)847-4243